

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated January 5, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 3, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

spacer means connected to said head for extending a spacing between a pair of bones forming a joint and thereby tensioning a ligament joining said pair of bones, said blade recessed from said spacer means.

31 Claim 2 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 1, wherein said spacer means comprises a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Claim 3 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 2, wherein said thickness is about 31 millimeters.

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Claim 4 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 1, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Claim 5 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 4, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 6 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 4, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (original): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Claim 9 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 8, wherein said thickness is about 31 millimeters.

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Claim 10 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 8, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Claim 11 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 10, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 12 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 10, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 13 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 8, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 14 (original): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a cylindrical handle having grip means for facilitating a firm grip of the ligament cutter;

an extension connected to said handle, said extension tapering away from said handle; and

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a head connected to said extension, said head having a distal end with a pair of joint spacers connected thereto, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness which is greater than a thickness of said blade¹¹², wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint^{112 154};

wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head;

wherein said blade¹¹² is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): ~~The ligament cutter of Claim 15, wherein~~ A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers, said head has having a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.^{112 154}

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Claim 17 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~15~~ 16, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~15~~ 16, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claims 19 and 20 (canceled)

Claim 21 (currently amended): ~~The ligament cutter of Claim 19, wherein~~ A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said head ~~has~~ having

a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

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Claim 22 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~19~~ 21, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~19~~ 21, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 24 (canceled)

Claim 25 (currently amended): ~~The ligament cutter of Claim 24, wherein~~ A ligament cutter,
comprising:

a handle;


a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a joint spacer connected to said head and extending distally from said distal end of

said head, said head ~~has~~ having a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned
intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

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Claim 26 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~24~~ 25, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

 Claim 27 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~24~~ 25, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claims 28 and 29 (canceled)

Claim 30 (currently amended): ~~The~~ A ligament cutter ~~of Claim 28~~, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle, said head having a ~~wherein said~~ curvature in a plane perpendicular to said blade, said curvature substantially ~~matches~~ matching the curvature of a femoral head.

Claim 31 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~28~~ 30, further comprising:

spacer means connected to said head for extending a spacing between a pair of bones forming a joint and thereby tensioning a ligament joining said pair of bones, said blade recessed from said spacer means.

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Claim 32 (previously presented): The ligament cutter of Claim 31, wherein said spacer means comprises a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The ligament cutter of Claim 30, wherein said blade is recessed from said spacer means.

Claim 34 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~28~~ 30, further comprising:
a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The ligament cutter of Claim 34, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claims 36-42 (canceled)